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BYELORUSSIAN COMMUNISM AND NATIONALISM: PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

by

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● 121 Western literature on the Soviet Union is strikingly bereft of material on both the "nationalist deviations" in the U. S. S. R. and the workings of the Communist Party on the local and regional levels. The present manuscript is intended as a contribution toward providing the student with material for filling this gap.

The author provides an account of Byelorussian political life between the two wars, covering many problems not heretofore elucidated in Western literature. The intensified Soviet campaign against "bourgeois nationalists" since the second World War assumes new significance in the light of evidence presented here on similar purges and campaigns antedating the recent drive by many years. In Byelorussia the anti-nationalist campaign affected both Communist nationalists and non-Communist separatists, decimating a considerable part of the national intelligentsia.

The manuscript is based exclusively on the author's personal recollections. It is not the product of research, if only because of the striking lack of printed sources on much of the material which the author covers. It is offered merely as raw material for the Western researcher. While an effort has been made to spot check verifiable dates and events, the manuscript must be considered unedited. In particular, the author's political views are entirely his own and do not necessarily represent those of the sponsoring organization. However, it has seemed proper to present the manuscript in its original form as a contribution toward a hitherto neglected subject.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

• 121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

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185 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power,

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.